

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----058073 191112Z /23
O 191056Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2818
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 19318

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UN MILI US IS EG
SUBJECT: SILASVUO ON UNEF RENEWAL

REF: STATE 198364

1. SUMMARY. UNEF COMMANDER ABIN EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS THAT UNEF MANDATE MIGHT NOT BE RENEWED AND ALLUDED TO GAMASY'S RECENT TALK WITH SILASVUO ABOUT AN AUGMENTED UNTSO TO REPLACE UNEF, IF NECESSARY. SILASVUO, WHO HAS BEEN CALLED BACK FROM LEAVE BECAUSE OF UNIFIL, CALLED LAST EVENING TO DISCUSS SUBJECT. HE EXPLAINED THAT CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR AN AUGMENTED UNTSO TO REPLACE UNEF, IF NECESSARY, HAD BEEN ORDERED BY UN SYG'S AIDES. GAMASY HAD SUBSEQUENTLY RAISED THE MATTER WITH HIM, BUT CAUTIONED THAT SILASVUO SHOULD NOT TAKE REPORTS OF POSSIBLE TERMINATION OF UNEF TOO LITERALLY. GAMASY CLAIMED THAT HIS QUESTION WAS BASED ON POSSIBILITY UNSC, BECAUSE OF SOVIETS, MIGHT NOT RENEW UNEF MANDATE. I TOLD SILASVUO IN CONFIDENCE OF MY PERTINENT DISCUSSION WITH SADAT. I EMPHASIZED OUR DESIRE TO TAMP DOWN RUMORS THAT UNEF MIGHT NOT BE RENEWED AND URGED THAT SILASVUO OR LOCAL UNEF COMMANDERS

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AVOID RAISING MATTER. SILASVUO AGREED. HE DOUBTED THAT GOE WILL TERMINATE UNEF AND SAID HE HAD NOT EVEN MENTIONED THE MATTER TO THE ISRAELIS. END SUMMARY.

2. AT INDONESIAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION TWO EVENINGS AGO, I RAN INTO MAJOR GENERAL RAIS ABIN, UNEF COMMANDER. ABIN EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS THAT GOE MIGHT

ON OCTOBER 25 NOT RENEW UNEF MANDATE AND NOTED THAT SILASVUO HAS ALREADY DISCUSSED WITH GAMASY THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AUGMENTED UNTSO TO REPLACE UNEF IF NECESSARY. I TOLD ABIN THAT I HAD HEARD OF THE GAMASY/SILASVUO TALK AND HAD BEEN A BIT SURPRISED THAT SILASVUO SEEMED TO HAVE SO READILY AGREED THAT UNTSO COULD TAKE THE PLACE OF UNEF. ON HIS PART, ABIN EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SILASVUO HAD NOT DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH ME. I TOLD ABIN THAT THIS WAS DOUBTLESS INADVERTENT, SINCE SILASVUO AND I HAD TRIED TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO MEET DURING THE GENERAL'S LAST TRIP, BUT COULD NOT DO SO BECAUSE EACH OF US HAD TO GO TO ALEXANDRIA AT DIFFERENT TIMES. ABIN THEN SAID THAT SILASVUO HAD BEEN CALLED BACK FROM LEAVE IN FINLAND BECAUSE OF UNIFIL SITUATION AND WAS EXPECTED IN CAIRO FOLLOWING DAY (FRIDAY) ENROUTE TO BEIRUT. HE SAID HE WOULD TRY TO ARRANGE THAT SILASVUO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME WHILE HERE.

3. LATE LAST EVENING SILASVUO SHOWED UP AT MY DOOR. HE HAD ARRIVED ONLY A FEW HOURS EARLIER. SILASVUO APOLOGIZED FOR HIS INABILITY TO HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ME EARLIER ABOUT HIS TALK WITH GAMASY ON AN AUGMENTED UNTSO. HE THEN DESCRIBED THE EVENTS LEADING TO THAT TALK AS FOLLOWS.

4. DURING WALDHEIM'S RECENT VISIT TO THE AREA, ONE OF
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THE SYG'S AIDES (UNSPECIFIED) HAD ASKED SILASVUO TO PREPARE A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR AN UNTSO-TYPE ORGANIZATION TO REPLACE UNEF IF THE EGYPTIANS SHOULD REFUSE TO RENEW THE LATTER. THE AIDE HAD SUGGESTED HE ALSO RAISE THE MATTER WITH GAMASY. SILASVUO CLAIMED THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF RAISING IT WITH GAMASY, BUT THAT GAMASY HAD ASKED HIM ABOUT THE MATTER. WHEN SILASVUO SAID HE HAD HEARD RUMORS THAT EGYPT MIGHT NOT RENEW THE UNEF MANDATE, GAMASY SAID SUCH REPORTS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TOO LITERALLY. GAMASY PROFESSED TO BE ASKING HIS QUESTION BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL MIGHT NOT AGREE TO RENEW UNEF. SILASVUO CLAIMS THAT THE IMPLICATION WAS CLEAR THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT BLOCK A RENEWAL. IT WAS ON THAT BASIS, SILASVUO SAID, THAT HE HAD OUTLINED FOR GAMASY AN AUGMENTED UNTSO CONCEPT TO REPLACE UNEF SHOULD THIS BE NECESSARY. THE FORCE WOULD BE ABOUT 600 STRONG AND WOULD HAVE TO RELY HEAVILY UPON HELICOPTER PATROLS. SILASVUO COULD NOT EXPLAIN WHY GAMASY MIGHT HAVE RAISED THE MATTER OTHER THAN THE NORMAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING THAT ANY MILITARY COMMANDER ENGAGES IN. SILASVUO SAID HE PERSONALLY DOUBTS THAT EGYPT HAS ANY INTENTION OF NOT RENEWING UNEF.

5. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR HIS EXPLANATION AND
SID THAT WE, TOO, HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT GOE MIGHT,
IN THE ABSENCE OF PROGRESS ON THE PEACE PROCESS, NOT
RENEW UNEF. I TOLD HIM IN CONFIDENCE THAT I HAD DIS-
CUSSED WITH PRESIDENT SADAT THE WHOLE MATTER OF THE
DURATION OF SINAI II AND UNEF UNDER THAT AGREEMENT.
WHILE THE PRESIDENT AGREES THAT SINAI II IS IN EFFECT
UNTIL SUPERSEDED BY ANOTHER AGREEMENT, HE HAD CONTENDED

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EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

THAT THE EGYPTIAN OBLIGATION TO RENEW UNEF IS LESS
RESTRICTED. HE HAD ALSO RECALLED THAT HE DEFINED HIS
INTERPRETATION OF HIS UNEF RENEWAL COMMITMENT IMMEDIATELY
AFTER THE SIGNING OF SINAI II IN TERMS OF THREE YEARS.
WE ARE IN DISAGREEMENT ON THIS, BUT I PERSONALLY DOUBTED
THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL WANT TO TERMINATE UNEF. IN ANY
EVENT, WE ARE ANXIOUS TO TAMP DOWN RUMORS THAT UNEF MIGHT
NOT BE RENEWED. I HOPED THAT SILASVUO OR LOCAL UNEF
COMMANDERS WOULD AVOID RAISING THE MATTER WITH GAMASY OR
EGYPTIAN OFFICERS. AT THE SAME TIME, IF EGYPTIANS RAISE
MATTER AGAIN, I WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED. SILASVUO
ASSURED ME THAT NEITHER HE NOR UNEF COMMANDERS INTEND TO
INITIATE DISCUSSIONS OF POSSIBLE UNEF RENEWAL.

6. SILASVUO ALSO SAID THAT HE HAS NOT INFORMED ISRAELIS
OF GAMASY'S QUERY AND ASKED THAT WE PROTECT HIS CONFI-
DENCE BY KEEPING THE MATTER TO OURSELVES. I SAID THAT I
WAS SURE THE ISRAELIS HAVE ALSO HEARD RUMORS OF THE
POSSIBILITY OF UNEF TERMINATION AND HAVE QUERIED US ABOUT

THEM. I ASSURED HIM THAT HIS CONFIDENCE WOULD BE STRICTLY HONORED.

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7. COMMENT: WE KNOW GAMASY'S STAFF HAVE STUDIED IMPLICATION OF NON-RENEWAL OF UNEF AND HAVE RECOMMENDED AGAINST ANY SUCH ACTION. NOR DO I BELIEVE THAT GAMASY WANTS UNEF TERMINATED. HE IS AWARE, HOWEVER, THAT THE DECISION WILL BE A POLITICAL ONE WHICH SADAT WILL MAKE. HENCE, ON CONTINGENCY BASIS, HE HAS LOOKED INTO ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS. SADAT'S DECISION WILL BE INFLUENCED IN LARGE PART BY RESULTS OF CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. EILTS

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